United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Tennessee News Release

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In Cooperation with Tennessee Department of Agriculture

TENNESSEE WHEAT YIELDS CUT IN HALF

NASHVILLE, May 11, 2007 - Tennessee's 2007 winter wheat per acre yield is forecast at 32.0 bushels per acre, down 50 percent from last year's record and the lowest since 1991, according to a recent survey conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Tennessee Field Office. Production is forecast at 7.36 million bushels, down 39 percent from 2006. This large decline in both yield and production can be attributed to record low temperatures during the first week of April that devastated this year's rapidly developing crop. Freeze damage assessments for the week ending April 15 showed over two-thirds of the state's wheat crop suffered severe damage and over a fourth experienced moderate damage.

Tennessee farmers seeded 400,000 acres last fall, 120,000 more than a year earlier, and the largest one year acreage increase since 1981. Wheat producers expect to harvest 230,000 acres for grain, 40,000 more than a year ago. The remaining 170,000 acres were used as a cover crop, will be harvested for hay or silage, or abandoned due to freeze. By the week ending May 6, nearly 90 percent of the State's acreage had headed with development a few days ahead of normal. Currently, over three-fourths of the crop is rated in very poor to poor condition.

United States: Winter wheat production is forecast at 1.62 billion bushels, up 24 percent from 2006. Based on May 1 conditions, the U.S. yield is forecast at 43.5 bushels per acre, 1.8 bushels above last year. Grain area totals 37.2 million acres, up 19 percent from last year. Soft Red Winter (SRW) harvested acreage is estimated to be up 8 percent from last year. The portion of the winter wheat crop rated good to excellent on April 29, at 56 percent, was 20 percentage points above last year.

Growers in many States in the Soft Red Wheat area expect yields to be below last year. Winter wheat crop conditions deteriorated in several Delta States due to a freeze on April 7-8. Parts of Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee, and Kentucky were adversely affected by the freezing temperatures. The cold weather hit during a critical time in some areas, just as the crop was starting to head. Harvested area across the southern portion of the Soft Red Wheat area is up from last year due to an increase in planted acres. Fewer planted acres due to wet conditions in the fall coupled with the April freeze damage is expected to result in fewer harvested acres across the central and northern portions of the Soft Red Wheat region.

Winter Wheat: Tennessee, Surrounding States, and U.S., May 1, 2007 with Comparisons[1]

State	Acreage Harvested		Yield Per Acre		Production	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
	1,000 Acres		Bushels		1,000 Bushels	
Arkansas	305	600	61.0	46.0	18,605	27,600
Georgia	120	250	49.0	40.0	5,880	10,000
Kentucky	320	190	71.0	38.0	22,720	7,220
Mississippi	73	300	59.0	59.0	4,307	17,700
Missouri	910	750	54.0	42.0	49,140	31,500
North Carolina	420	460	59.0	42.0	24,780	19,320
TENNESSEE	**190**	**230**	**64.0**	**32.0**	**12,160**	**7,360**
Virginia	155	175	68.0	61.0	10,540	10,675
United States	31,117	37,172	41.7	43.5	1,298,081	1,615,613

[1] 2007 forecast, 2006 final.

TENNESSEE MAY 1 HAY STOCKS LOWEST SINCE 1996

Tennessee: Hay stocks on Tennessee farms totaled 425,000 tons on May 1, down 43 percent from last year and the lowest since 1996. Hay supplies were short to adequate going into the winter months, with some pockets of severe shortages. Prolonged dry weather during the winter contributed to poor pasture growth and the lack of available grazing. As a result, most producers began feeding hay much earlier than normal and some shortages led to herd reductions. Disappearance of hay from December 1, 2006 - May 1, 2007, totaled 2.68 million tons, 7 percent lower than the 2005 disappearance of 2.88 million tons for the same period a year earlier.

United States: All hay stored on farms May 1, 2007 totaled 15.0 million tons, down 30 percent from the previous year and the lowest since 1950. Disappearance of hay from December 1, 2006 - May 1, 2007, totaled 81.4 million tons, 3 percent less than the disappearance of 83.9 million tons for the same period a year earlier. Thirty-eight of the 48 reporting States had lower May 1 hay stocks than a year ago. Hay stocks in most of these States were also below year ago levels on December 1, 2006. Drought conditions during most of 2006 caused deterioration of pastures throughout the Southeast resulting in increased supplemental feeding of hay, reducing the December 1 stocks. The drought in that area persisted into the winter and spring which also increased the amount of hay fed. Elsewhere, supplemental feeding increased in the central Plains and Midwest due to some harsh mid-winter storms and below normal temperatures in April.

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